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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

Friday, December 6, 1940

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "CHECK YOUR DIET TODAY." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

Today I'd like to tell you about one of the biggest volunteer diet projects in the world. It's part of the Health program of 4-H clubs all over the country--with hundreds of thousands of boys and girls taking part.

These boys and girls take their diets seriously. That is, they know that the right food helps them to be strong--healthy--good looking. What's more, they've worked out the most important rules of good nutrition so simply that even a 10-year-old youngster can understand them.

It's easy for a 4-H club member to understand about diets because he feeds a calf or chickens himself. He can readily see that these animals must have the right food if they are to grow. So the club member doesn't need a nutrition book to understand that a good diet makes for a healthy body and an attractive appearance. What he does need is some guide to show him which foods make up a good diet for a young, growing person.

Of course, no one expects these boys and girls to understand the whole field of nutrition. But they can learn about the protective foods--the foods that are most important for health and growth.

Early in the club year, the boys and girls are given a list of the protective foods to check against their own diets each day. Then they can tell whether they are getting all of the necessary foods--and learn where their diets need improvement.



In just a few minutes I'll give you the list they use--in case you'd like to write it down.

Of course, good nutrition is just part of the 4-H Club health program. The club members also know the importance of good posture--exercise--fresh air--and sleep--.....all the things that help them to have strong bodies and clear alert minds.

You see boys and girls of 4-H club age--that is, from 10 to 15 or 16 years--are growing by leaps and bounds. That's why food and health habits are so important for these young people. Good growth for youngsters of this age makes for strength--endurance--and poise. Besides it may help to overcome certain defects carried over from earlier years.

And the 4-H club leaders feel that good growth at this age makes the boys and girls better club members--helps them to work harder--play harder--lead happier, healthier lives. Their good health is reflected in glossy hair--bright eyes--smooth skin--and a happy outlook on life.

Now going back to the nutrition part of the health program....here's the list of protective foods I was telling you about. The first thing on the list is MILK--from a pint and a half to a quart of milk each day. Then comes another dairy product BUTTER--1 to 3 servings a day.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES are next on the list. From 4 to 5 servings of either fruits or vegetables are suggested. A good balance is 1 serving of potato--1 serving of citrus fruit or tomatoes or raw cabbage--1 serving of a green or yellow colored vegetable--and 2 more servings of fruits or vegetables. Whenever possible, try to have green or yellow kinds.

WHOLE-GRAIN BREAD AND CEREALS are also on the list--with 1 to 2 servings of whole grain in some form suggested. Next comes 2 servings of either EGGS, MEAT, FISH, DRIED BEANS OR PEAS. And of course, you'll want to choose 2 different kinds--that is, if you have eggs at one meal, use meat or cheese at another.





As for LIQUIDS you'll need at least 2 quarts. That includes water and milk to drink, and also in soup and beverages. The last item on the list is COD-LIVER OIL. One teaspoon of cod-liver oil is suggested to supplement the boy's or girl's diet in the winter--especially if the whole milk, butter, eggs, and green-colored vegetables are likely to run short.

When the need for these protective foods is taken care of--nutritionists suggest that boys and girls eat additional bread and cereals, as well as some sweets and fats, as needed to supply the calories for work and play.

This 4-H club daily food guide is conveniently elastic. It will fit all sorts of different cases. There's a range in the number of servings suggested--because different families have different amounts of money to spend for food. The smaller number of servings of milk, fruits, and vegetables is the least you can afford to use--and still insure good health and growth. The larger number of servings is a much better standard, if you can manage to get them.

The interesting thing about such a food guide is that when a youngster actually checks over the food eaten each day--he often finds that his diet is not measuring up to a good standard. But I'm glad to report that many of these boys and girls do something about it. The boys may plan to add a piece to the family garden plot--so there'll be more fresh vegetables for the family..And this leads the girls to work out a better canning program--a plan that will assure the family of all the canned food they need during the winter.

This diet guide was originally planned for club work. Boy Scouts--Girl Scouts--Campfire Girls--and other clubs besides the 4-H have found it helpful. But it's just as useful for any boy or girl to use at home. No boy or girl can afford to neglect good diet during the important growing years.

If there are growing children in your family--maybe they'll have fun trying out the 4-H club system of checking their diets, and working for good health and good growth.

